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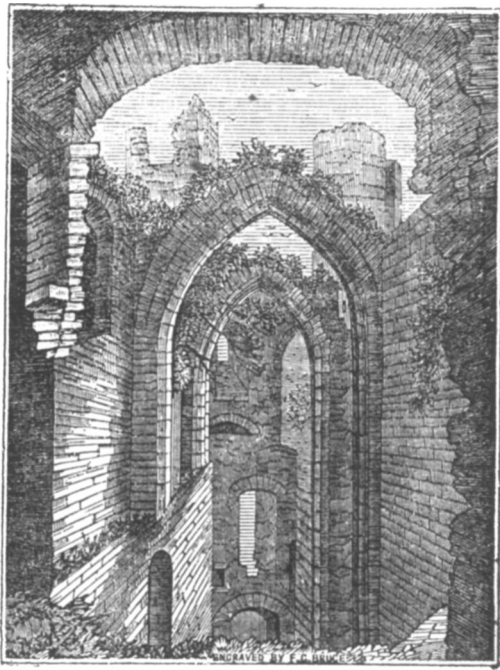
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TRIM CASTLE.



Trim Castle, standing on the banks of the Boyne, forms a pleasing object in the landscape. Sir R. C. Hoare says that it "is almost the only building in Ireland that deserves the name of *castle*." It was originally erected by Hugh de Lacy, to secure his large possessions in Meath, or, as Camden asserts, by William Peppard, previously to the grant of Meath to De Lacy, and continued during successive centuries to be the most important stronghold of the English Pale. According to an historical fragment by Maurice Regan, published by Harris, in his *'Hibernica,'* Hugh de Lacy, on completing the building, departed for England, leaving it in the custody of Hugh Tyrrell, 'his intrinsicke friend.' The king of Connaught, taking advantage of De Lacy's absence, assembled all his powers, with a view to its destruction; and though Tyrrell, advised of his coming, dispatched messengers to Strongbow for assistance, and though the earl marched towards Trim in all haste, yet Tyrrell, seeing the enemy at hand, and thinking himself too weak to resist their numbers, abandoned the castle, and burnt it; upon which the Irish monarch, satisfied with the success of his expedition, returned home. Strongbow, however, pursued him, and, falling upon the rear of his army, slew 150 of the Irish; which done, he retired to Dublin, and Hugh Tyrrell to the ruined castle of Trim, to re-edify it before Hugh de Lacy should return from England. The castle was built in a much stronger manner, upon the ruins of the old one. Here, in 1399, Richard II. who was then in Ireland, hearing of the progress of the Duke of Lancaster in his English dominions, imprisoned the sons of his rival and of the Duke of Gloucester; the former of whom was afterwards drowned on his passage to England. In 1425, Edmund Mortimer, earl of Meath and Ulster, who had possessed the inheritance of Trim, and, as Lord Lieutenant of the island, had enjoyed more than customary authority in that office, died of the plague in this castle.

Lord Barrymore built a fine house at Castle Lyons, county of Cork, formerly called Castle Lehan, on the foundation of O'Lehan's castle. In throwing down some of the old walls of the castle, a chimney-piece was discovered with the following inscription, "Lehan O'Cullone hoc fecit, MCIII." which proves that stone buildings were much earlier in Ireland than some modern antiquarians allow them to have been.

THE PATTERN OF THE LOUGH.

"Old times are changed, old manners gone."—*Scott.*

"The pattrern," as it is pronounced by the peasantry, is the remnant of an ancient and religious custom which is now very much on the decline, or nearly extinct. At least, it is so changed and deformed from its original design, as scarcely to retain any marks of what it once was intended for. In the early ages of Christianity in Ireland, it signified a festival or holiday, instituted in honor of the patron saint of the parish or district, and hence called a pattern or patron saint's day. Formerly the people assembled at sun-rise, at a certain place, and performed certain kind of prayers, called *stations*, which occupied some time, and consisted of certain forms of prayer, recited on the knees, and in companies—one person giving out, and all the rest responding; and this is repeated at several places, fourteen being the usual number. The pattern was usually held in the vicinity of a holy well, near a chapel, on a hill side, where grew a lonely tree, or such other place, consecrated by custom from times long past away: but now the good intention and the prayers are all forgotten—and "divarshin and dhrinkin" are the only ostensible motives for which old and young assemble. Tents are pitched around the scite, as in a fair, for the sale of whiskey, and all the pipers and fiddlers, for miles around, are collected—and courting, dancing, drinking, and fighting prevail until the close of the day. This custom, I have said, is on the decline through Ireland; and, during a few years back, several patterns, in different places, have ceased altogether.

This custom was not peculiar to this country; for, during the primary stages of Christianity in England, *wakes* were instituted for nearly similar purposes as our Irish patterns. The people assembled near the churches on the eve of the patron saint's day, and erected bowers of green branches, (if it was summer weather) which they decorated with flowers, in a gay manner, and remained there all the night, praying and singing hymns. Hence it was termed "the wake," from the people being awake all night. The next day, as a thing of course, was devoted to feasting and rejoicing, being a holiday, when the devotees made amends, by their mirth and good cheer, for the penance and mortification done and endured during the former night's vigil. The wake is still held through England; but, like the Irish, they have dispensed with the religious part of the ceremony, and only hold the holiday and the festival. The amusements, considering the different temperament of the people of both nations, are nearly the same. Ass races, running in sacks, eating cakes for a wager, playing single-stick for a collection, dancing, drinking, &c. &c. are carried on with that system and in that dull spirit of method and rule, so different from what we know in Ireland. Yet, if their sports want the life, spirit, animation, and eccentricity of ours, they also want that character of violence and bloodshed which too frequently are seen to stain even the most trifling of the amusements of our peasantry.

We must come to the province of Leinster, where, I believe, above all other parts of this island, the patterns are still most frequently held. On the banks of the beautiful *Lough Ouel* or *Houel*, situated within two small miles of the town of Mullingar, there is still a pattern held on the first Sunday in August, called, among the country people, the "Pattern of the Lough;" and the Sunday on which it falls is as marked among the festivals of the year as Easter Sunday or Christmas Day, and usually referred to by the title of "Lough Sunday." The tents are usually pitched on the Saturday previous, in a field adjoining to that in which the great crowd collects; and the principal attraction is the swimming of horses in the lake. Early on the Sunday morning the multitudes assemble from all quarters of the country; some for the purpose of amusement or meeting friends who live at a distance; others to settle the preliminaries of a marriage contract; a great many, because it is the custom, and because others go; but the greater number to meet and fight the people of an adjacent barony, or to revenge some real or imaginary quarrel or insult. Swimming horses in the lake is a fa-